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"JESUS PAID IT ALL."

Lee W. Rood is billed to make an "address" before the county singing convention to be held in this city next Sunday, and thereby hangs a tale. It is just nine years ago this June since Rood made his last address in this city. It was during the never-to-be forgotten local option campaign of 1906, the climax of which resulted in the county voting dry and Caruthersville wet. Many here remember Rood's promises made on that date. He was the leader in declaring that Caruthersville would vote dry, and that if it did not he would work to remove the county seat to Hayti in the election which was to follow. That promise yet rings in the ears of many Hayti citizens, and with as resounding echoes as if uttered yesterday. What happened is history. The county voted dry and Caruthersville wet. A few months later the county seat election was held, and there is plenty of substantial evidence as to how Rood kept his promise. One instance, in particular, may be cited: Mr. Rood accompanied J. S. Wahl to Steele during the county seat campaign, and was a highly pleased man when he saw fifty dollars passed to each of the saloons of that city with which to fight and defeat Hayti. But after nine years Rood is coming back. During these nine years lots of things have happened with which Rood has been connected. As said, since nine years ago he has had a very eventful career. He has been the promoter of various enterprises, and of as various characters. His sudden and dexterous rise from a poorly paid school teacher to banker and capitalistic promoter was phenomenal. He went up like a skyrocket. Several business blocks in Caruthersville were reared to bear the imprint of his ownership. Handsome cottages and bungalows of his financing added to the beauty and wealth of that city. And there was the rich Rood farms of broad acres out in the country. Down in the State of Mississippi the buzz of sawmill machinery responded to the magic touch of his wealth. Perhaps, however, for more than anything else, Rood is noted for being promoter and financial backer of the Argus. It has been generally known, since its organization in Caruthersville, that Rood had been head and tail of the Argus, especially the head. The Argus has been his pet enterprise, and when times were dull it is said he never permitted it to suffer. The editor's mind was not allowed to become contaminated by worry over such sordid things as filthy finance, and all his brilliant intellect was left free and pure to conduct a campaign of reform.

It was the mission of the Argus to reform everybody but the members of its family—and the head of the family being Lee W. Rood, he needed no reforming. So the Argus, with its unflinching fountain of financial support and immaculate moral strength, accomplished a wonderful lot of good, even if there is no tangible evidence of it. For instance, there was its support of the famous Kangaroo court. The fulminations of the Argus upon that still echo along the horizon like the roll of dying thunder. It took money to pull off that stunt, and it is asserted that Rood stood behind the whole show like a stone wall, guaranteeing the payment of all expenses. Not all the cost has ever been paid, it is true, but what was paid came through the hands of Rood. It is also true that no good results were attained; instead a lot of good

money was squandered and bitter feelings engendered that will never die. But it afforded Rood and the Argus a lot of fun, and if they got the worth of their money (more properly speaking, THE money) others should not complain. Then there arose the county auditing. Nobody has forgotten how Rood and the Argus set the county atire about that. That was a juicy plum as long as it lasted, and it lasted long enough, and then some. They got the boxing so hot that things finally began to happen, and the happening hasn't yet stopped. But the Argus became absolutely choked to death on its own vomit. It is too dead on that subject to even whine. Such silence has long been noticeable to even the deaf, dumb and blind. Its silence is so thick that you can cut slices out of it that smells like Limberger cheese. One of the first things to happen was the failure of the Pemiscot County Bank. That was all right so long as it affected only the Pemiscot County Bank. While there was no visible connection, shortly thereafter came the resignation of Lee W. Rood as cashier of the Peoples Bank, and it now develops that, with the filing of suit in circuit court last week against Rood's bondsmen by which the bank seeks to recover \$9,115.30 it accuses the former cashier of manipulating from its funds to his own use, a different reason for his retirement than was given at the time, is apparent. It seems now that the Argus was after the wrong set of books and that instead of howling about the county's books its time would have been better spent demanding an audit of the Pemiscot County Bank and the Peoples Bank books. The fact that on April 28, 1911, in making FINAL SETTLEMENT with the county, former Collector J. W. McFarland issued to Treasurer J. A. Bigham a check for \$41,000, drawn on the Pemiscot County Bank, which Mr. Bigham deposited with the Peoples Bank for collection and which remained unpaid, and on May 1 the Pemiscot County Bank bid in the county's money, giving Mr. Rood and other prominent members of his bank as bondsmen, still remains unexplained, but the wonder is: Mr. Rood, holding this \$41,000 check, did not bid for the county's deposits for his bank or inform the county court that Tindle's bank was insolvent. But of course "poor" Averill, in obedience to his master's call, was ignorant as to these incidents. And aware of these facts, the "reform" Argus is as silent as a defunct oyster can. It has no more to say than the little boy the yearling ran over. It

appears that the Argus family has been caught in the wreck of the houses they tried to pull down upon others, and the pressure of the timbers cuts their wind off. Their chickens have come home to roost and they refuse to recognize them. It was a great feast for the Argus to fill its columns about county graft, and what happened to A. C. Tindle et al.; and not satisfied with his local means of publicity, the editor of the Argus had to enlarge his scope by becoming correspondent for the Commercial Appeal, and not a single item reflecting upon the "opposition" was permitted to escape. But you don't see anything in the Argus or the Commercial Appeal about the Peoples Bank trying to collect the insignificant sum of \$9,115.30 from the bondsmen of Lee W. Rood, do you? No, not with a microscope. Publicity is for the other fellows. All you can see in the Argus about Rood is his announcements to lecture at the rural Sunday schools of the county, in the evangelization of which he generally has the company of the editor of that sheet. That is probably where Tindle et al. failed. They didn't have the Argus brand of religion, for they would have been martyred saints had they gone out into the brush and saved the backwoods Sunday schools from their sins. They neglected to take avail of that good old song, "Jesus Paid It All." Religion overshadows everything else—if it is the right kind—the Argus kind—the unselfish kind—the kind that has for its motto: "Make the other fellow good, but never mind yourself." If Tindle et al. had had that kind of religion and gone out among the Sunday schools accompanied by the

editor of the Argus, then have fought their cases in court, called for a jury, and selected same from among their Sunday school converts, their sins might have been repudiated and they gone free. Of course the people of the "tall timber" would not have had sense enough to have seen through a scheme of that sort, and the Argus would not have been so indiscreet as to have enlightened them as to what was going on. But it is no matter if sinners like Tindle et al., who are too vile to go out and save the Sunday schools, do have to suffer for their wrongs.

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